

lands of the north, on the other hand, a perfect army of reformers, of various shades of tendency, arrayed themselves against traditional abuse. To these men the humanist movement came as a call to the battle with such abuse, as well as an inspiration to a new intellectual life. Whether churchmen like Wimpfeling, Erasmus, Faber, Colet, Zwingli, or laymen like Reuchlin, Melancthon, More, they were equally earnest in their striving to make knowledge the handmaid of reform. And this reform was of far-reaching range. It embraced not merely education, general culture. It fastened, as we shall see more at large presently, on theological, social, political questions. It attacked tradition all along the line. In reformers like Reuchlin and Erasmus it brought the resources of critical scholarship to the study of the Bible in the original Hebrew and Greek, in spite of the fierce antagonism of obscurantist theologians and zealots like the converted Jew Pfefferkorn, the Dominican monk Hochstraten, the schoolmen of Louvain and Paris, and created the science of modern theology, critical if believing, scholarly if orthodox. In Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon, Calvin, it struck at the traditional theology as well as at the traditional philosophy. In More, as in Machiavelli, it turned the searchlight of criticism on politics, but in More, as we shall see, political and social reform was wedded to a beautiful aspiration after the highest good of the people by the use of the noblest methods, not, as in Machiavelli, to a frightful system of political immorality. It eventuated in a Montaigne, a Giordano Bruno, and a Bacon, in the beginnings at least of a new philosophy and a new scientific method. It was thus the commencement of that vast revolution on behalf of liberty and truth which is still so powerfully operative in the cause of progress among the modern nations. With the Renaissance, despite what seems to us its limitations, its errors, the cause of free inquiry, free self-assertion, took possession of the future. If the age did not achieve in this direction all that we should wish it to have done, let us be thankful that it achieved so much. The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding sure; and if we remember what a contrast the age of the Renaissance presents to that which preceded it, we can only marvel at the miracle of its achievement. In the